MR. LINCOLN AND THREE FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

A CHAPTER FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THURLOW WEED.

IMMEDIATELY after the nomination of Mr. Lincoln for President, at Chicago, in the summer of 1860, while annoyed and dejected at the defeat of Governor Seward, as I was preparing to shake the dust of the city from my feet, Messrs. David Davis (now a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States) and Leonard Sweat called at my room. These gentlemen, warm friends and zealous supporters of Mr. Lincoln, had contributed more than all others to his nomination. After his name was presented as a candidate for President and received with favor by the citizens of Illinois, Messrs. Davis and Sweat visited Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, for the purpose of commending Mr. Lincoln to the favorable consideration of prominent men in those States. They now called to converse with me about the approaching canvass. I informed them very frankly, that I was so greatly disappointed at the result of the action of the Convention as to be unable to think or talk on the subject; that I was going to pass a few days upon the prairies of Iowa; and that by the time I reached Albany I should be prepared to do my duty for the Republican cause and for its nominees. They then urged me to return home via Springfield, where we could talk over the canvass with Mr. Lincoln, saying that they would either join me at Bloomington, where they resided, or meet me at Springfield.

After passing with a few friends a pleasant week in travelling through Iowa, I repaired to Springfield. There I found Messrs. Davis and Sweat with Mr. Lincoln. I had supposed until we now met that I had never seen Mr. Lincoln, having forgotten that in the fall of 1848, when he took the stump in New England, he called upon me at Albany, and that we went to see Mr. Fillmore, who was then the Whig candidate for Vice-President. We entered immediately upon the question which deeply concerned the welfare of the country, and which had an especial interest for Mr. Lincoln. We discussed freely the prospects of success, assuming that all or nearly all the slave States would be against us. The issues had already been made, and could neither be changed nor modified; but there was much to be considered in regard to the manner of conducting the campaign, and in relation to States that were safe without effort, to those which required attention, and to others that were sure to be vigorously contested. Viewing these questions in their various aspects, I found Mr. Lincoln sagacious and practical. He displayed throughout the conversation so much good sense, such intuitive knowledge of human nature, and such familiarity with the virtues and infirmities of politicians, that I became impressed very favorably with his fitness for the duties which he was not unlikely to be called upon to discharge. This conversation lasted some five hours, and when the train arrived in which we were to depart, I rose all the better prepared to "go to work with a will" in favor of Mr. Lincoln's election, as the interview had inspired me with confidence in his capacity and integrity.

In December of that year, and after the Electoral Colleges had shown a large majority for Mr. Lincoln, I was invited to visit him at Springfield, where I again met my friends Davis and Sweat. Mr. Lincoln, although manifestly gratified with his election, foresaw and appreciated the dangers which threat-

ened the safety both of the Government and of the Union. But while Mr. Lincoln never underestimated the difficulties which surrounded him, his nature was so elastic and his temperament so cheerful, that he always seemed at ease and undisturbed. The day I left Albany, the "Evening Journal" contained an editorial foreshadowing secession and rebellion; an editorial which had for its object the holding of the border slave States in the Union, so that the boundaries and strength of the rebellion might be narrowed and weakened. It maintained that radical abolitionists were playing into the hands of disunion leaders, and that both would become responsible for the civil war into which we were drifting. It comprehended the horrors of such a conflict, and implored the Northern people to keep themselves clearly in the right, so that when the shock came impartial nations would see and say that the rebellion was without justification or excuse. That editorial drew the line between radical and conservative Republicans, and continued as an issue before the people during the war. It was written under a conviction of its necessity in preventing a disastrous division of the Northern people. I believed then, as I know now, that but for the conservative sentiment awakened in the Republican party, the North would have been fatally divided. I believed then, as I know now, that by insisting that the war was prosecuted to maintain the Government and preserve the Union, the Democratic masses, with some of their leaders, would remain loyal; while, on the other hand, if the whole Republican party proclaimed it a war for the abolition of slavery, a united South would prove too strong for a divided North. The following extracts from that editorial, showing its spirit and purpose, may appropriately be introduced here:

"'NO MORE COMPROMISES.' 'NO BACKING DOWN.'

"With two or three exceptions, the *suggestions* of the 'Evening Journal' having an adjustment of the controversy which threatens to divide the Union for their object, have elicited from the Republican press, in this and other States, responses in the spirit of these head lines. That our views encounter the 'vigorous resistance' of our political friends, causes less of surprise than of regret. . . . We differ again with our political friends. That difference, however, would be very slight with most, and disappear entirely with others, if we could but look into the future from the same standpoint. To do this, it is indispensable that all should realize that the Presidential election is over; that there was virtually but one question involved in the conflict, viz., that the territory devoted by the Missouri Compromise to freedom should not be invaded by slavery; that, the freedom of Kansas assured, the territorial question may now be safely left to natural laws; that, as a party, we were indebted to the folly of our adversaries for the triumph we achieved, and that, until their aggressions were aroused, our mission was ended; and that, finally, the madness which swayed pro-slavery counsels for six years has culminated in an openly avowed determination to dissolve the Union.

"When Republicans will 'back down' long enough to look at the new issue presented, lifting their eyes and thoughts a little above the political horizon, they will discover that the duties of the partisan and the patriot harmonize; that the principles of the Republican party, derived from the political fathers, teach devotion to the Union as our first duty. All high and holy aims and reforms can be best accomplished in the Union. Dissolved, the great experiment of self-government is a failure. Dissolved, the aspirations for pervading prosperity and happiness, a high civilization, and an exalted nationality, vanish. . . .

"We come now to the consideration of the real question, the magnitude and

fearfulness of which is but imperfectly comprehended. This question must have a violent or a peaceful solution; its mighty import will be appreciated when we reflect upon the consequences resulting from the former alternative. We should do all that can be done in the way of justice, equity, conciliation, and forbearance, to avert a conflict; but if all efforts in that direction prove fruitless, it is better to rebuke treason, enforce the laws, and preserve the Union, cost what it may, than suffer its dismemberment. . . . . .

"But in that controversy we are *not* wholly blameless. If there are beams in our neighbor's eye, there are motes in our own. Too many of us forget that when this Union was formed, slavery was the rule, freedom the exception. While we—climate, soil, and interest favoring and seconding our sentiments and sympathies—have been working out, other States, with adverse complications and elements, have worked more deeply into slavery. Thousands upon thousands of our citizens, swayed by feelings to which we are neither insensible nor indifferent, with no slavery to oppose at home, have deemed it their duty to demand the abolition of slavery elsewhere, forgetting in their zeal that it exists in the Southern States under the Constitution, and with the consent of our fathers, who bound themselves and their descendants to obey that Constitution. Societies have been formed, presses established, tracts distributed, and emissaries sent into the slave States, teaching that slavery is sinful, and that slaves ought to be emancipated. These lessons, in harmony with all the humanities of civilization, were easily learned. But in learning them, we did not find written on the same page, nor in the same chapter, that in our efforts to abolish slavery we should provide indemnity to the owners. When we refer, as we often do, triumphantly, to the example of England, we are prone to forget that emancipation and compensation were provisions of the same act of Parliament.

"It will and may be said that *we* are forgetting the wrongs, encroachments, aggressions, and outrages of slavery. True. We choose to do so just now. It is a new and novel position, for we have been all our life showing up the dark side of the slavery picture. But in view of a fearful calamity, there is no want of consistency or of fidelity in going to the verge of conciliation with the hope of averting it. Then, after all honorable offers of agreement have been exhausted, if

> There comes a power
> Into some of our best parts, and are at point
> To show their open banner,
> Mocking the air with colors idly spread,

sustained by the reflection that we have done our duty in endeavoring to preserve peace, we shall be prepared to go as far, and dare as much, as those whose impatient zeal may precipitate a conflict the horrors of which will add appalling chapters to the history of the French Revolution."

The much-dreaded conflict came, and, although more fearful than was or could have been apprehended, resulted auspiciously for our Government and Union. The radicalism which occasioned the editorial from which the foregoing extracts are taken grew stronger and more aggressive as the war progressed. While the abolition masses were among the first to enter and the last to leave the army, their leaders who remained at home were viciously hostile to the Administration. Indeed, they carried their hostility to the extent of attempting, by a third-party nomination at Cleveland, to defeat Mr. Lincoln's reëlection.

This article reached Springfield by the evening mail. After reading it very attentively, Mr. Lincoln said: "This is a heavy broadside. You have opened your fire at a critical moment, aiming at friends and foes alike. It will do some good

or much mischief. Will the Republicans of New York sustain you in this view of the question?" I replied, "that I had acted upon my own sense of what was wise for our cause; that I should be denounced in most of the Republican journals; that enlightened politicians who entertained similar views would hesitate to express them, and that it would largely impair, if it did not wholly destroy, my influence in the Republican party; but that, notwithstanding these consequences, I should unflinchingly persevere in the course I had marked out, with a clear and firm conviction that in doing so, aided by a small minority of Republican journals, with here and there a conservative statesman, we should keep the North united in prosecuting a war which, in preserving the Government and Union, would overwhelm and destroy rebellion and slavery." Mr. Lincoln replied, "that these views, views which had not occurred to him, opened a new channel for his thoughts, and that while he should watch the progress of popular sentiment, he hoped to find my apprehensions unfounded." He added, "that while there were some loud threats and much muttering in the cotton States, he hoped that by wisdom and forbearance the danger of serious trouble might be averted, as such dangers had been in former times."

And after this subject had been talked up, and over, and out, Mr. Lincoln remarked, smiling, "that he supposed I had had some experience in cabinet-making; that he had a job on hand, and as he had never learned that trade, he was disposed to avail himself of the suggestions of friends." Taking up his figure, I replied, "that though never a boss cabinet-maker, I had as a journeyman been occasionally consulted about State cabinets; and that although President Taylor once talked with me about reforming his Cabinet, I had never been concerned in or presumed to meddle with the formation of an original Federal Cabinet, and that he was the first President elect I had ever seen."

The question thus opened became the subject of conversation, at intervals, during that and the following day. I say at intervals, because many hours were consumed in talking of the public men connected with former administrations, interspersed, illustrated, and seasoned pleasantly with Mr. Lincoln's stories, anecdotes, etc. And here I feel called upon to vindicate Mr. Lincoln, as far as my opportunities and observation go, from the frequent imputation of telling indelicate and ribald stories. I saw much of him during his whole Presidential term, with familiar friends and alone, when he talked without restraint, but I never heard him use a profane or indecent word, or tell a story that might not be repeated in the presence of ladies.

Mr. Lincoln observed that "the making of a Cabinet, now that he had it to do, was by no means as easy as he had supposed; that he had, even before the result of the election was known, assuming the probability of success, fixed upon the two leading members of his Cabinet, but that in looking about for suitable men to fill the other departments, he had been much embarrassed, partly from his want of acquaintance with the prominent men of the day, and partly, he believed, that while the population of the country had immensely increased, *really great men were scarcer than they used to be.*" He then inquired whether I had any suggestions of a general character affecting the selection of a Cabinet to make. I replied that, along with the question of ability, integrity, and experience, he ought, in the selection of his Cabinet, to find men whose firmness and courage fitted them for the revolutionary ordeal which was about to test the strength of our Government; and that in my judgment it was desirable that at least two members of his Cabinet should be selected from slaveholding States. He inquired whether in the emergency which I so much feared they could

be trusted, adding that he did not quite like to hear Southern journals and Southern speakers insisting that there must be no "coercion"; that while he had no disposition to coerce anybody, yet after he had taken an oath to execute the laws he should not care to see them violated. I remarked that there were Union men in Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, for whose loyalty, under the most trying circumstances and in any event, I would vouch. "Would you rely on such men if their States should secede?" "Yes, sir; the men whom I have in my mind can always be relied on." "Well," said Mr. Lincoln, "let us have the names of your white crows, such ones as you think fit for the Cabinet." I then named William Cost Johnson of Maryland, John M. Botts of Virginia, John A. Gilmore of North Carolina, and Bailey Peyton of Tennessee. As the conversation progressed, Mr. Lincoln remarked that he intended to invite Governor Seward to take the State, and Governor Chase the Treasury Department, remarking that, aside from their long experience in public affairs and their eminent fitness, they were prominently before the people and the Convention as competitors for the Presidency, each having higher claims than his own for the place which he was to occupy. On naming Gideon Welles as the gentleman he thought of as the representative of New England in the Cabinet, I remarked that I thought he could find several New England gentlemen whose selection for a place in his Cabinet would be more acceptable to the people of New England. "But," said Mr. Lincoln, "we must remember that the Republican party is constituted of two elements, and that we must have men of Democratic as well as of Whig antecedents in the Cabinet." Acquiescing in this view, I remarked that men of Democratic antecedents were to be found in New England whose names would strike the public more favorably than that of Mr. Welles, prominent among whom were Governors Banks and Boutwell of Massachusetts; and here for the time being the subject was passed over. And then Mr. Lincoln remarked that Judge Blair had been suggested. I inquired, "*What* Judge Blair?" and was answered, "Judge Montgomery Blair." "Has he been suggested by any one except his father, Francis P. Blair, Sr.?" "Your question," said Mr. Lincoln, "reminds me of a story;" and he proceeded with infinite humor to tell a story which I would repeat if I did not fear that its spirit and effect would be lost. "But," said Mr. L., "to be serious, what do you think of Judge Blair?" I said that I had no personal acquaintance with that gentleman, but that I had been accustomed to regard him as anything but an agreeable political bedfellow, and that I hoped he would not punish himself and others by taking a man into his Cabinet who would keep it constantly in hot water. "Then you think," said Mr. L., "that Judge Blair, like farmer Tabor's brindle ox, should be unyoked in the yard?" In talking further about Mr. Blair, I objected to him strongly on the ground that he represented nobody, and that while Mr. Lincoln proposed to credit him to Maryland, the Republicans of that State had no interest in him. I added that Mr. Blair, as a politician, resembled a bishop without a diocese, inasmuch as his political speeches were neither heard nor heard of by the people till they appeared in the Washington newspapers. I finally remarked that if we were legislating on the question, I should move to strike out the name of Montgomery Blair, and insert that of William Cost Johnson. Mr. Lincoln laughingly replied, "Davis has been posting you up on this question. He came from Maryland and has got Cost Johnson on the brain. Maryland must, I think, be like New Hampshire, a good State to move from." And then he told a story of a witness in a neighboring county, who on being asked his age replied, "Sixty." Being satisfied that he was much older, the judge repeated the question, and on

receiving the same answer, admonished the witness, saying that the Court knew him to be much older than sixty. "Oh," said the witness, "you're thinking about that fifteen year that I lived down on the Eastern Shore of Maryland; that was so much lost time and don't count." This story, I perceived, was thrown in to give the conversation a new direction. It was very evident that the selection of Montgomery Blair was a fixed fact; and although I subsequently ascertained the reasons and influences that controlled the selection of other members of the Cabinet, I never did and never could find out how Mr. Blair got there.

General Cameron's name was next introduced; and in reference to him, and upon the peculiarities and characteristics of Pennsylvania statesmen, we had a long conversation. In reply to a question of Mr. Lincoln's, I said that I had personally known General Cameron for twenty-five years; that for the last ten years I had seen a good deal of him; that whenever I had met him at Washington or elsewhere, he had treated me with much kindness, inspiring me with friendly feeling. "But you do not," said Mr. L., "say what you think about him for the Cabinet." On that subject I replied that I was embarrassed; that Mr. Cameron during a long and stirring political life had made warm friends and bitter enemies; that while his appointment would gratify his personal friends, it would offend his opponents, among whom were many of the leading and influential Republicans of that State; that I was, as I had already stated, in view of an impending rebellion, anxious that Mr. Lincoln should have the support of not only a strong Cabinet, but one which would command the confidence of the people. We continued to canvass General Cameron in this spirit for a long time, Mr. Lincoln evidently sharing in the embarrassment which I had expressed, and manifesting, I thought, a desire that I should fully endorse General Cameron. I told him that if it were a personal question I should not hesitate to do so, for that I liked General Cameron and entertained no doubt of his regard for me; but that as I was not sure that his appointment would give strength to the Administration, I must leave the matter with himself. "But," said Mr. L., "Pennsylvania, any more than New York or Ohio, cannot be overlooked. Her strong Republican vote, not less than her numerical importance, entitles her to a representative in the Cabinet. Who is stronger or better than General Cameron?" To this question I was unprepared with a reply, for among General Cameron's friends there was none eminently qualified, and it would have been equally unjust and unwise to take an opponent; and finally General Cameron's case was passed over, but neither decided nor dismissed.

I now renewed my suggestion about having the slave States represented in the Cabinet. "But," said Mr. Lincoln, "you object to Judge Blair, who resides in a slave State." "I object to Judge Blair because he represents nobody, he has no following; and because his appointment would be obnoxious to the Union men of Maryland; and that, as I believe, while he can look into Maryland, he actually resides in the District of Columbia." "Very well," said Mr. Lincoln, "I will now give you the name of a gentleman who not only resides in a slave State, but who is emphatically a representative man. What objection have you to Edward Bates of Missouri?" "None—not a shadow or a shade of an objection. That is a selection, as Mr. Webster might have said, 'eminently fit to be made.' The political record of Mr. Bates is proverbially consistent. He was a reliable Whig member of Congress from the State of Virginia thirty years ago; he was the able and popular President of the great River and Harbor Improvement Convention at Chicago twenty years ago. His high personal and profes-

sional character, his habits of industry, his equable temper, and his inalienable devotion to the Government and Union, fit and qualify him, in my judgment, admirably for a Cabinet minister."

Mr. Lincoln said in talking of Mr. Bates: "I am reminded of the advice which Mr. Barton, a distinguished lawyer of St. Louis, gave to a client thirty or forty years ago. A young man from Pittsburgh, Pa., stopped at the hotel in St. Louis, and immediately placed a package of money in deposit with the branch Bank of the United States; after which, and during the day, he made several investments, and drew several checks. On the following morning a person called on him to say that he was wanted at the bank, where, as he entered, he found several gentlemen in conversation, one of whom informed him that they had received information of a robbery of the bank from which the money he had deposited had been taken, and that, though delicate and unpleasant, it was deemed proper to inquire who he was, and whether he came honestly in possession of so large a sum of money. The young man replied that he was the son of a wealthy and well-known citizen of Pittsburgh, but that he had no acquaintances in St. Louis, and was unable to identify himself. The bank men thought under the circumstances that it was their duty to retain the money until they could be satisfied that he was the honest owner of it. Finding himself in a tight place, the landlord advised the young man (whose name, I think, was Anderson) to employ counsel, and recommended him to Squire Barton, the law partner of the famous Colonel Thomas H. Benton. He found Squire Barton at his office, over a store, in his shirt sleeves, who listened attentively and without speaking until the whole case was laid before him, and then taking the young man to an open window, said, 'That's a pretty large amount of money for a stranger to carry around with him. There've been a good many robberies lately. 'Tisn't an honest way of getting a living, but some people don't find that out till they've tried it. If you're the son of General Anderson, as I hope you are, and didn't steal that money, my advice is that you face the music, and I will stand by you; but if, as I strongly suspect, you were tempted, and that money isn't honestly yours, I advise you (pointing in the direction indicated) to make tracks for that tall timber, and to put the Mississippi between you and these bank fellows as soon as you can find a crossing.' 'And how much shall I pay you for your advice?' inquired his client. 'If you intend to *hook it*, five dollars. If you remain and prove yourself an honest lad, nothing.'"

It was now settled that Governor Seward was to be Secretary of State, Governor Chase Secretary of the Treasury, and Mr. Bates the Attorney-General. I was satisfied that Mr. Lincoln intended to give Mr. Welles one of the other places in the Cabinet, that he was strongly inclined to give another place to Mr. Blair, and that his mind was not quite clear in regard to General Cameron. Only one place, therefore, remained open, and that, it was understood, was to be given to Indiana; but whether it was to be Caleb B. Smith or Colonel Lane was undetermined. I inquired whether, in the shape which the question was taking, it was just or wise to concede so many seats in his Cabinet to the Democratic element in the Republican party. He replied that, as a Whig, he thought he could afford to be liberal to a section of the Republican party without whose votes he could not have been elected. I admitted the justice and wisdom of this, adding that in arranging and adjusting questions of place and patronage in our State we had acted in that spirit; but that I doubted both the justice and the wisdom, in inaugurating his administration, of giving to a minority of the Republican party a majority in his Cabinet. I added that the National Convention indicated unmis-

takably the sentiment of its constituency by nominating for President a candidate with Whig antecedents, while its nominee for Vice-President had been for many years a Democratic Representative in Congress. "But," said Mr. Lincoln, "why do you assume that we are giving that section of our party a majority in the Cabinet?" I replied that if Messrs. Chase, Cameron, Welles, and Blair should be designated, the Cabinet would stand four to three. "You seem to forget that *I* expect to be there; and counting me as one, you see how nicely the Cabinet would be balanced and ballasted. Besides," said Mr. L., "in talking of General Cameron, you admitted that his political status was unexceptionable. I suppose we could say of General Cameron, without offence, that he is 'not Democrat enough to hurt him.' I remember that people used to say without disturbing my self-respect that I was not lawyer enough to hurt me." I admitted that I had no political objection to General Cameron, who I was quite sure would forget whether applicants for appointment had been Whig or Democrat. I then renewed the suggestion relating to North Carolina or Tennessee, earnestly pressing its importance. Messrs. Davis and Sweat united with me in these views. Mr. Lincoln met us with strong counterviews, the force of which we were constrained to admit. "If," said Mr. L., "contrary to our hopes, North Carolina and Tennessee should secede, could their men remain in the Cabinet? Or, if they remained, of what use would they be to the Government?" We, however, continued to press our point, until Mr. Lincoln yielded so far as to say that he would write a letter to the Hon. John A. Gilmore, then a member of Congress from North Carolina, briefly stating his views of the duty of the Government in reference to important questions then pending, and inviting him, if those views met his approval, to accept a seat in the Cabinet.

"Now," said Mr. Lincoln, "if Mr. Gilmore should come in, some one else must stay out, and that other somebody must be either Judge Blair or Mr. Bates." Messrs. Davis, Sweat, and myself exclaimed against dropping Mr. Bates; and so Mr. Lincoln left us to infer that if Mr. Gilmore came in, Mr. Blair would be excluded. Before the subject was finally dismissed, I recurred to Mr. Welles, not, as I remarked, with any expectation of changing the programme, but to suggest that if Mr. Lincoln, when on his way to Washington, would stop long enough in New York Philadelphia, or Baltimore to select an attractive figure-head, to be adorned with an elaborate wig and luxuriant whiskers, and transfer it from the prow of a ship to the entrance of the Navy Department, it would, in my opinion, be quite as serviceable as his Secretary, and less expensive. "Oh," said Mr. Lincoln, "'wooden midshipmen' answer very well in novels, but we must have a live Secretary of the Navy." In this way, the conversation being alternately earnest and playful, two days passed very pleasantly. I wish it were possible to give in Mr. Lincoln's amusing but quaint manner the many stories, anecdotes, and witticisms with which he interlarded and enlivened what with almost any of his predecessors in the high office of President would have been a grave, dry consultation. The great merit of Mr. Lincoln's stories, like Captain Bunsby's opinion, "lays in the application on it." They always and exactly suited the occasion and the subject, and none to which I ever listened were far-fetched or pointless. I will attempt, however, to repeat but one of them. If I have an especial fondness for any particular luxury, it manifests itself in a remarkable way when properly-made December sausages are placed before me. While at breakfast, Mr. Davis, noticing that, after having been bountifully served with sausage, Oliver Twist like, I wanted some more, said, "You seem fond of our Chicago sausages." To which I responded affirmatively, adding that

I thought the article might be relied on where pork was cheaper than dogs. "That," said Mr. Lincoln, "reminds me of what occurred down at Joliet, where a popular grocer supplied all the villagers with sausages. One Saturday evening, when his grocery was filled with customers, for whom he and his boys were busily engaged in weighing sausages, a neighbor with whom he had had a violent quarrel that day came into the grocery, made his way up to the counter, holding two enormous dead cats by the tail, which he deliberately threw on to the counter, saying, 'This makes seven to-day. I'll call round Monday and get my money for them.'"

In the course of our conversations, Mr. Lincoln remarked that it was particularly pleasant to him to reflect that he was coming into office unembarrassed by promises. He owed, he supposed, his exemption from importunities to the circumstance that his name as a candidate was but a short time before the people, and that only a few sanguine friends anticipated the possibility of his nomination. "I have not," said he, "promised an office to any man, nor have I, but in a single instance, mentally committed myself to an appointment; and as that relates to an important office in your State, I have concluded to mention it to you, under strict injunctions of secrecy, however. If I am not induced by public considerations to change my purpose, Hiram Barney will be Collector of the Port of New York." I supposed that Mr. Lincoln, in thus frankly avowing his friendship for Mr. Barney, intended to draw me out. I remarked that until I met him at the Chicago Convention, my acquaintance with Mr. Barney was very slight; but that after the Convention adjourned, Mr. Barney joined us (my daughter and a lady friend) in an excursion down the Mississippi and through Iowa, and that my impressions of him personally and politically were favorable, and that I believed he would make an acceptable Collector. I added, that if it were true, as I had heard, that the reply of an extensive and well-known mercantile firm in New York during an exciting crisis to Southern merchants who threatened to withdraw their patronage on account of its opposition to slavery, viz., "We offer our goods, not our principles, for sale," originated with Mr. Barney, it entitled him to any office that he asked for. "He has not," said Mr. Lincoln, "asked for this or any other office, nor does he know of my intention."

And now, as I was preparing to depart, Mr. Lincoln said: "Some gentlemen who have been quite nervous about the object of your visit here, would be surprised, if not incredulous, were I to tell them that during the two days we have passed together, you have made no application, suggestion, or allusion to appointments." I replied that nothing of that nature had been upon my mind, and that I was much more concerned about the welfare of the country and the successful working of his Administration, than about matters which would come to perplex all upon whom responsibilities rested, but which it would be both premature and indelicate to obtrude upon him now. "This," said Mr. Lincoln, "is undoubtedly a proper view of the question, and yet so much were you misunderstood that I have received telegrams from prominent Republicans warning me against your efforts to forestall important appointments in your State. Other gentlemen who have visited me since the election have expressed similar apprehensions; but I have remarked that while our friends were extremely sensitive in relation to *your* designs, they brought along an axe or two of their own to be ground." I told Mr. Lincoln that I had been a great many years actively engaged in political affairs; that I had been associated in conventions, State and national, with friends whose wishes in reference to candidates had generally been gratified; that I had never asked for, or intimated a desire for a promise or

a committal, directly or indirectly, of any description, of any candidate, from a President to a Justice of the Peace, antecedent to his nomination and election; that I had been in consultation with Governors Clinton, Seward, Young, Fish, Hunt, Clark, King, and Morgan, after their election and before their inauguration, under circumstances similar to those which had rendered my present visit a duty and a pleasure; but that I entertained too high a sense of the honor which the confidence of distingnished statesmen in high public position conferred, to annoy them or stultify myself by thrusting before them unseasonably mere questions of office—questions that would unavoidably come in due time to engross their thoughts and perplex their judgment.

A year or two after this visit, President Lincoln, while talking with me about the peculiarities of his Cabinet, said that immediately after his election, thinking that the Vice-President, from his high character and long experience, was entitled to a voice in the Cabinet, the selection of the New England man was conceded to him, and that Mr. Hamlin named "Father Welles." I then informed Mr. Lincoln that there was a precedent for the consideration he had shown for Vice-President Hamlin; that General Taylor, immediately after his election to the Presidency, wrote a letter to the Vice-President elect, in which, after expressing his gratification in being associated with a gentleman of large experience in the civil service of the Government, on whom he could rely for information and advice, he indicated his desire that the Vice-President should act as an *ex officio* member of his Cabinet. But when General Taylor reached Washington, he ascertained that his views in this respect were impracticable, if not unconstitutional.

It is proper to add before closing this chapter that Mr. Lincoln made me the bearer of his letter to Mr. Gilmore, with which I repaired to Washington. It being an open letter, Mr. G., after reading it attentively, entered into a frank conversation with me upon the question which was exciting profound interest and anxiety in and out of Congress. He said that he entirely approved of the views of Mr. Lincoln on that question, and that he was gratified with the confidence reposed in him; but that before replying to it, he deemed it proper to confer with members of Congress from Southern States who like himself were opposed to secession. Soon afterward the "Border State Proposition" was rejected by the House of Representatives. Under these circumstances, hopeless of keeping North Carolina in the Union, Mr. Gilmore declined the offer of a seat in the Cabinet.

THURLOW WEED.

NOTE.—In a number of THE GALAXY which contained a chapter entitled "Incidents of the Rebellion," I stated, on what I supposed to be reliable information, that the name of Lieutenant-Colonel Henry L. Scott had been very properly stricken from the roll of the United States Army. This accusation, as I have recently learned, is untrue, and therefore unjust. Letters have been submitted to me showing that Colonel Scott resigned previous to his departure for Europe in 1861; but that Lieutenant-General Scott deemed it proper not only to withhold his resignation, but to have his name placed upon the retired list. On learning which, Colonel Scott wrote to the War Department declining the pension, and asking that his resignation should be accepted, to which Colonel Scott received a letter from the Adjutant-General, acknowledging the receipt of his letter and accepting his resignation.

T. W.